Met Office

NEWS

# Increasing climate challenge to Wimbledon Championship

**Author:** Grahame Madge
08:46 (UTC+1) on Thu 1 Jul 2021

## Climate change will have an increasing impact on our lives, including the sport we love to watch.

For Environment Day, the AELTC has joined forces with COP26 – the UN Climate Change Summit set to be hosted by the UK in Glasgow later this year – and the Met Office to create a spotlight on the environment during this year's Championships.

Commenting on the initiative COP26 President-Designate Alok Sharma said: "In this year of significant climate action across the United Kingdom ahead of COP26, it is exciting that Wimbledon has chosen to hold an Environment Day.

"Every aspect of our lives has an impact on the climate, from the food we eat to the sports that we love to watch and play, and tennis is no exception.

"I am therefore delighted to see that Wimbledon will join COP26 in encouraging everyone to go one step greener to tackle climate change and to build a more sustainable world."

The Met Office has prepared a Future Forecast for the event which provides a plausible indication of how much climate change could affect the tournament in three to four decades time.

Aidan said: "In the case of this forecast, the data showed a heatwave that occurred at the beginning of July in 2059. Now we're not saying that in July 2059 there will definitely be a heatwave. But, we can say that in the 2050s, the UK will continue to experience heatwaves and these are the kinds of temperatures we can expect during those heatwaves."

Professor Stephen Belcher, the Met Office's chief scientist, commented: "All the available evidence points towards the fact that our climate is changing: we have already seen aspects such as extreme heat, and the worse is yet to come.

"The UK has not recorded temperatures of more than 38.7 °C. However, our climate projections show temperatures of 40.0 °C or more are possible at Wimbledon even during future tournaments, posing considerable challenges for the health of players and spectators.

"Climate change will affect every facet of our lives, including the sports we love to watch. Wimbledon Environment Day is a reminder that society has very little time left to keep the temperature of our atmosphere within sustainable limits."

A host of environment champions will be visiting the tournament, including: COP26 Champion Nigel Topping; Professor Lord Nicholas Stern, Finance Advisor to the Prime Minister for COP26; Dr Mya-Rose Craig; Mark Carney Angela Francis; Bear Grylls and Adam Henson.

AELTC Chief Executive Sally Bolton OBE commented: "We believe that the AELTC and The Championships have a meaningful role to play in helping to protect the environment, today and for the future. Changes to our climate are accelerating and we have a responsibility to play our part, mitigating our own impacts, ensuring we have a climate resilient estate for the future and using our influence to support this important cause."

You can read more about Wimbledon's environment day here.

**Professor Peter Stott at Wimbledon explaining the potential impacts of climate change using Met Office climate projections**.

The future forecast was based on climate projections using a high-emissions scenario.

Aidan McGivern explains: “One of the biggest sources of uncertainty in climate change is how much the world manages to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the years to come. That’s why climate scientists model future global warming under various scenarios.”

Although this forecast has used one of the higher emission scenarios, in the middle of the century - where we are focusing - the difference in climate response between scenarios is much less than later in the century when the benefits of mitigation actions taking place now become much more apparent. In this scenario, the UK can expect a temperature rise of around 1.7 Celsius compared to the 1980-2000 average.

Aidan added: “Under a different scenario, in which global emissions start to decrease now and reduce to zero by 2070, the UK warming would be 1.4 degrees compared to the same average.

“The levels of greenhouse gas concentrations by the 2050s in this scenario are fed into the computer model. The model then simulates weather patterns every day for a decade or so and these simulations are run several times. A key difference, compared to running the model in 2021, is that the atmosphere has a more pronounced greenhouse effect.

“What the climate scientists found was that the UK obviously continues to experience highly changeable weather from day to day and from place to place. But when heatwaves occur, they last longer and the maximum temperatures are higher compared to the present-day.”

Met Office
© Crown Copyright